

DB

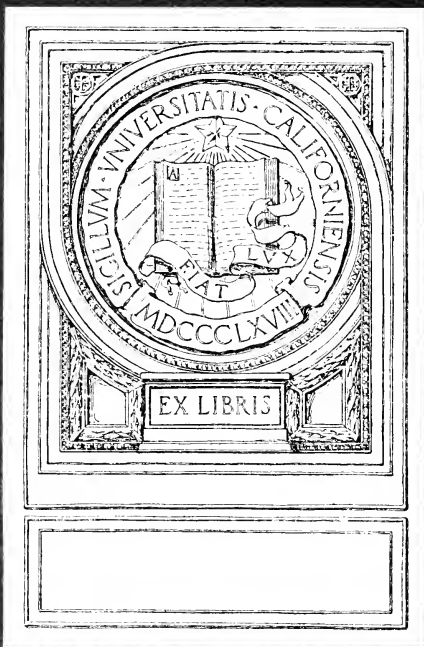
499

B5

UC-NRLF



B 4 072 146



SIGILLUM UNIVERSITATIS CALIFORNIENSIS
E PLURIBUS UNUM
MDCCCLXVIII

EX LIBRIS

Religious Persecution in Galicia.

(AUSTRIAN POLAND.)

BY

W. J. BIRKBECK, M.A., F.S.A.

Copies of this Pamphlet may be obtained from
GEORGE BERRIDGE & CO.,
174, UPPER THAMES STREET, LONDON, E.C.

Price 1d., or by Post 1½d.

DBA-99
BE

TO VIKU
ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION.

The drafting of the following pages was originally commenced in the form of a letter to the *Times*. But as the work progressed, it assumed proportions beyond anything for which any journal could be expected to find room, more especially at such a time as the present. I therefore determined to write a short letter to the *Times*, giving merely the main points, and to publish the longer letter with considerable additions in the form of a pamphlet. I desire to express my grateful acknowledgments to the Editor of the *Times* for giving me the opportunity of calling the attention of those of its readers who care to pursue the subject to this longer statement, and also for his courtesy in permitting me to reprint in full the correspondence which appeared in its columns in the months of April and May. This will be found in an Appendix at the end of this pamphlet.

W. J. B.

STRATTON STRAWLESS, NORWICH,
November, 1912.

Religious Persecution in Galicia.

In the *Times* of April 10th there appeared a letter,* under the above heading, from a Member of the Russian Imperial Duma, the Count Bobrinsky, in which a state of things was described which it seemed, to say the least, difficult to reconcile with those principles of absolute freedom of conscience which are incorporated in the formularies of the Austrian Constitution of 1867. In the course of a few days two replies† appeared from natives of Galicia, in each of which “every line” and “all details” of Count Bobrinsky’s letter were declared to be “false” and “contrary to truth.”

It was quite evident to anyone in the least conversant with contemporary Galician local politics that the writers of these letters, Prince Paul Sapiéha, a Polish landowner, and Mr. Stepankowsky, a Ruthenian, belonged respectively to the Polish and Ukrainophil‡ parties. These parties are divided from one another on many fundamental questions; for while each of them would like to set up, at the expense of Austria and Russia, an independent State reaching from the Carpathians to the Caucasus, the Ukrainophil party are not as anxious as the Polish party think that they ought to be that it should take the shape of a restoration of the old Polish Republic, with East Galicia, Volhynia and the other Little Russian portions of it dominated over, as large portions of them were of old, by a selfish and irresponsible Polish nobility. But they are always to be

* Appendix, page 19. † Appendix, pages 22 and 23. ‡ From the Russian word *Ukraina*, which signifies a borderland. In this case the Ukraine referred to is that part of Russia which, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, constituted the debatable borderland, or, as we should say, marches, between Muscovy and Poland, and the Khanate of the Crimean Tartars.

found united when any matter, secular or religious, arises in which their common hatred of Russia and all things Russian can find expression. As these two writers, as well as Count Bobrinsky, each of them expressed a wish in the *Times* that some Englishman should go to Galicia, and, by investigating the matter on the spot, should judge between them for the benefit of the British public, I took upon myself to do so, and accordingly spent the first part of a two months' journey in the East of Europe, from which I have just returned, amongst the cities and villages of Galicia.

It may be well first of all to state that, in addition to about $4\frac{1}{2}$ millions of Poles, and a million of Jews, and some 200,000 Germans, Galicia is inhabited, chiefly in its Eastern part, by $3\frac{1}{2}$ million Russians belonging to the Southern, or Little Russian, branch of the Russian people. In order to distinguish them from their brethren in the Russian Empire, it became customary in Austria in about the middle of the nineteenth century, but not, I think, before this, to call them (from their Latin name) Ruthenians, and, for convenience, I shall do so in this paper. But (*pace* Mr. Stepankowsky) "Ruthenian" is only Latin for "Russian," and for their own part they call themselves "Russians." It is true that for this a Ruthenian man uses the word *Rusin*, and not *Russki*: but Mr. Stepankowsky ought to know that this word is by no means confined to Galicia, or even to the Little Russians, but is used as well in several parts of Great Russia; for instance, I have observed this in some parts of the Archangel and Olenetz Governments, where I travelled in 1889. Moreover, while a Ruthenian man calls himself *Rusin* instead of *Russki*, a Ruthenian woman calls herself *Russka*, as does her sister in Great Russia; so that if Mr. Stepankowsky's contention amounts to anything, it would seem that at least the Ruthenian women are Russians, even if their husbands and sons are not. I can, anyhow, as far as Galicia is concerned, where Mr. Stepankowsky tells the readers of the *Times* that "there are no Russians," and "no Russian language is spoken," say that,

while travelling amongst them, I frequently heard the common people use the ordinary Russian expressions *nasha Rusj* ("our Russia") and *Rusj svjatája* ("holy Russia"), which expressions they use, not in a territorial or political, but in a racial sense,* and which may be amply accounted for by their past history. They originally formed an integral part of the Russian monarchy at the period, from the 10th century onwards, when its centre was at Kieff, and with the rest of the Russian nation they were converted to Christianity by Greek missionaries in the year A.D. 988 or shortly afterwards. They remained politically a part of Russia until they were conquered by the Poles under Casimir the Great in 1340. They still remained ecclesiastically in full communion with the Russian and Greek Churches until the end of the 16th century, when the Polish Government, under the influence of the notorious Jesuit Skarga, Court Chaplain to Sigismund iij., persuaded most of their bishops,† some of them by promises, others by threats, to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope. This is the origin of the Uniate Church in these parts, which, while in communion with Rome, and accepting Roman dogma, still retains the Eastern rite, the services continuing to be performed in the old Slavonic language, just as they are in Russia and in other Orthodox Slavonic States. The Bishops in the 16th century made their submission to Rome on condition that their Orthodox Eastern rite should remain unchanged; but from the very first this promise was constantly broken, and the whole subsequent history of this Church has been a record of Jesuits and Poles from time to time attempting to Latinize these services, and of dogged resistance on the part of almost the whole of the laity and the greater part of the parochial clergy to these innovations. The present crisis in Galicia is due to renewed efforts in the

* Just as the French in Canada may speak of themselves, their language and their culture as *Français*, without implying thereby that they either are, or desire to become, the subjects of the French Republic.

† The See of Lemberg itself held out against the Union with Rome until the year 1700.

direction of Latinization, the way for which has been prepared during the last thirty years by the authorities at Rome, owing to certain influences, having placed the training of the novitiate of the monastic order of the Basilians and the seminaries of the clergy into the hands of the Jesuits or their creatures.

Before I left England I had provided myself with introductions such as could get me into touch with the clergy and peasantry of the Ruthenian villages. But these I made no use of for six days after my arrival in Galicia—which days I spent in the Churches of Cracow and Lemberg, in order to form my own impressions of the ecclesiastical situation. As these days included the Latin (New Style) feast of the Assumption, and the Eastern Uniate (Old Style) feast of the Transfiguration, as well as a Sunday and the Emperor of Austria's birthday, I had abundant opportunity of attending a large variety of extraordinarily well attended services; so that, besides several of the ordinary Roman or Latin rite at Cracow and Lemberg, I was present at some twenty services, or parts of services, in the various Uniate Churches of the Oriental rite in the latter town. It would not be possible within the limits of the space now at my disposal to describe in detail the minutiae of ritual divergences from the Oriental rite in a Latin direction which I came across: this I purpose to do elsewhere. It will suffice to say that what I saw and heard fully coincided with Count Bobrinsky's assertion in the columns of the *Times* that "new customs and ceremonies, abhorred by the people, are being introduced." The greatest variety was apparent. No two services were quite alike; and it was not difficult to gauge the ecclesiastical and political predilections of the individual officiating clergy by the extent to which the Latinizing changes were protruded. Speaking generally, with the exception of the services in one of the Churches which I attended, and which were evidently conducted under conservative auspices, the process of Latinization has made great strides since I last saw the Ruthenian Uniate rite in Austria just twenty years

ago. I entered frequently into conversation with many of the people whom I casually came across in the Churches, including some of the choir-men and lay-readers, who were very courteous in showing me the service books and explaining things. I sought in vain for any layman taking part in these services who had a good word for the changes which are being introduced. Amongst those most resented seemed to be such things as devotions to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, processions and "Benedictions" of the reserved Sacrament, the cultus of St. Joseph, and the pressing into prominence of St. Josaphat Kuntzévich, "martyr" bishop of Polotsk. This "martyr" met his fate, in the early part of the 17th century, at the hands of his own flock, who, enraged at the Latin innovations he was trying to introduce, and his tyrannical methods of enforcing them, threw him into the River Dwina with a stone tied round his neck. I sincerely hope that the same fate may not befall the present Metropolitan of Galicia, Archbishop Andrew Sheptitzky; but although, as Prince P. Sapiéha says, he is not a member of the Polish party, he is a strong Ukrainophil; and, as such, he is entirely at one with the Poles and the Jesuits, so far as their ecclesiastical policy of Latinizing the Uniate rite is concerned. Mr. Stepankowsky speaks of Count Bobrinsky as "insulting publicly our Metropolitan." Truth requires me to state that I frequently heard "not a shepherd, but a wolf," which was the strongest expression used by Count Bobrinsky, from the lips of members of the Metropolitan's own flock in Lemberg, not to speak of other expressions still less complimentary. And, while I was in Galicia, I heard several of the Uniate clergy, men quite loyal to the Union with Rome, deploring the fact that their Metropolitan was a tool in the hands of the Jesuits, and that under their auspices he was bringing ruin upon the Church over which he presides.

During the following week I made three expeditions amongst the country villages; one in the flat country south of Lemberg, the other two amongst the villages in the Carpathians west of

Lemberg, inhabited by that part of the Ruthenian population which is known as the "Lemki," a name derived from a peculiarity in their local dialect, in which the word *lem* is used in place of the ordinary Russian word *lishj* ("only").

The objective of my first expedition in these parts was the village of Grab. My reason for selecting it was that, while it was one of the cases of persecution mentioned in Count Bobrinsky's letter to the *Times*, I had heard that his Polish opponents were making much of the fact that he had never himself personally visited this part of Galicia, and were saying that he had merely repeated the statements of "political agents" on hearsay. An acquaintance, whom I had made in Lemberg, accompanied me, who, although he had not lately been in those parts, had passed his childhood and youth there, having been the son of a Uniate priest in a neighbouring village. He therefore knew the country well; and, indeed, without some such assistance, it would have been impossible, travelling in a *teľięga* (or four-wheeled peasant's waggon) to find one's way about the rough mountain-roads from village to village.

The result of my investigation was that I found out that what Count Bobrinsky had written to the *Times* was the truth indeed, but not the half of it. Matters have moved since he wrote, and five other villages* had joined Grab in rejecting the Union and going over to the Orthodox Church. I talked to about forty peasants in Grab itself, and to about twenty in another village, and to several casual natives we met on the road as we passed through two other villages. There was no difficulty in entering into conversation with anyone whom I met, any more than there is when travelling in the villages in Russia itself, where the peasants no less than the gentlefolk always receive a friendly foreigner with open arms. Even after dark—for it was late in the evening before we reached my friend's old home,

*Their names are (I give the names as I was told them, with the alternative Polish spelling in the maps): Vyshevatka (*Wyszowadka*), Dolgoe (*Dlugic*), Lipna, Chernoe (*Czarne*), and Nezaevo (*Nieznaowa*). I visited three of these villages, and talked with the peasants in them,

where we were to pass the night—as one passed through the villages, one heard the greeting *Sláva Iisúsu Khristú* (Glory to Jesus Christ), which is the expression used by these peasants where we should say “Good day,” or the Russians *Zdrávstryjtje* (the Latin *Salvete*); and directly one had replied with the customary “*Sláva i nynje i vo vjéki*” (Glory, both now and for ever) they were ready to talk to us as if we had been old acquaintances. It would be impossible here to relate a tenth of the grievances which I heard. This I hope to do more at length elsewhere. Their revolt began with the attempts of a priest, whom the Bishop had sent to Grab, and who is a bitter Ukrainophil partisan, to introduce Latinizing innovations which are not in their service books, and also to force a language upon them which the Polish majority in the local Galician Parliament has made official, but which is not actually the language of any part of Galicia, and which amongst the Lemki is actually unintelligible. This “language” is an amalgam of three Little Russian dialects spoken in Galicia, as well as of other dialects spoken in Volhynia and Little Russia itself, with a liberal admixture of Polish words and expressions. It is, in fact, an artificial jargon, a sort of local Esperanto; and the main object both of its structure and of its orthography is to construct something which shall be as different as possible from ordinary literary Russian, in order that, by forcing this upon the children in the schools and in their religious instruction, the authorities may gradually render Russian literature inaccessible to them, and then, by means of books of devotion containing Latin prayers translated into the new language, sever them from the Orthodox traditions hitherto preserved in their Church. The process involves the further result that it likewise cuts them off from being able to read or understand the old Slavonic in which (as in Russia) their services are read. This policy of the Poles, of course, suits the Jesuits very well, as, if it ever succeeded, and the people could no longer understand what was being read in Church, it would

afford an excellent excuse for the substitution of the Latin for the Slavonic language. But it is exasperating to the Ruthenian peasantry in Galicia, who both understand and love their Church services, and where congregational singing in the Churches in the old Slavonic language is well-nigh universal. In fact, the language grievance in these villages loomed almost as large as the ritual grievance. I was told by one man after another that the Ukrainophil priests talked a language in the pulpit and in the confessional which he could not understand; that they tried to separate children from their parents by teaching them to pray in it; and that the spelling which their boys were being taught in the schools prevented them from reading the Epistle and the Psalter at the services in Church when their turn came, as their fathers and forefathers had always done. A version of the Lord's Prayer in this new "language," which is being forced on these children instead of the old Slavonic version to which they have always been accustomed, has given particular offence. The Americanism, "Who," instead of "Which art in heaven," which somewhat jars upon most Englishmen, finds its exact counterpart in the substitution of *kotrij* for *izhe*. But this is by no means all. Out of the 53 words which for nine centuries they have been accustomed to use in the Lord's Prayer, 21 have been changed, and in 17 more, where the Slavonic text could not be altered, the spelling has been changed, so as to make the words look different to the wording of their authorised service books; so that only 15 words in the whole Prayer remain untampered with. When the Lemki peasants showed it to me, while I could see that this new version contained several tasteless and vulgar colloquialisms, the terms "pagan" and "blasphemous," which they used of it, seemed to me somewhat over-strong. Not being myself an expert in the exact shades of meaning of the various local dialects, I some weeks afterwards showed this version to a good scholar in Little Russian dialects at Moscow, and specially pointed out to him the word *nekhái*, to which they had most objected,

and which is substituted for the Slavonic optative particle, *da*, in each of the first three petitions of the Lord's Prayer. He burst out laughing, and said, "Well, I don't wonder that they object there to *nekhái búde rólja Trojá*: if I were arguing with you in Little Russian, and lost my temper, and wished to say, 'bother you, have your own way,' those are the very words I should use." And this is the expression which the Uniate children are being taught to use, instead of the familiar and dignified words, which all people of Slavonic race perfectly understand, *da búdet rólja Trojá*, for "Thy will be done."

So far as the language which the peasants talk is concerned, I again found my experience to coincide with Count Bobrinsky's account. Mr. Stepankowsky tells your readers that "there is no Russian language spoken there." All I can say is that, although Russian is the only Slavonic language which I am able to speak, and the Old Slavonic, or Church language, the only other Slavonic language which I have seriously studied, I found that I could converse without much difficulty with these peasants both in this West Carpathian part of Galicia and also in the neighbourhood of Lemberg, where another local dialect is spoken by the common people. Those two dialects differ from one another just about as much as do the local dialects of Norfolk and Yorkshire; and they both differ from ordinary literary Russian as spoken in Moscow just about as much, and as little, as the Norfolk and Yorkshire dialects differ from ordinary literary English. The difficulties which I found in conversing with them were just of the same kind and extent which I have noticed foreigners, with a fair knowledge of English, who have stayed with me in Norfolk for shooting or other purposes, to find in conversing with a Norfolk gamekeeper or gardener. They at once understood everything I said; in all the conversations I had with them I was never once asked to repeat a sentence, and every question I asked was answered to the point. While I, for my part, often had to ask them to repeat a sentence, and still more often had to ask them to speak slowly

and quietly and one at a time, I seldom had much difficulty in making out their meaning. As is the case with English as it is spoken with us here in Norfolk, so also there, in many words the vowels are pronounced more or less differently to the ordinary Russian pronunciation, and occasionally words, not used in ordinary Russian, turned up, which I had to ask my friend to explain to me. Talking on religious matters was comparatively easy, as their ecclesiastical terminology is largely shaped from their service books written in the Old Slavonic.

I saw and talked with some forty peasants in the village of Grab alone. The cause of all the trouble there has been a priest, Kislévsky, who has been forced upon them, and who is a violent Latinizer, and bitter Ukrainophil politician. I heard their complaints against his conduct, in and out of Church, which were both varied and numerous. I cannot now go into them all. The two last straws seem to have been, firstly, that in 1910 he had arbitrarily cut the word "Orthodox" out of the prayer at the Great Entrance in the Liturgy: "May the Lord God remember all of you Orthodox Christians in His Kingdom," although it is printed in the service books which by the written law of his Church he is bound to use at the altar; and, secondly, that he had refused to register his people in the parish list as Russians. "We were always Russians and Orthodox, and so were our fathers and forefathers before us; we know now that Ukrainism is a bridge to make Poles of us, and that the *Unia* is a trap to turn us into Papists (*Katoliki*): we have left the *Unia* for ever, and they may fine us and rob us of our cattle, or even hang us and cut us up, but we will never go back to it." They had invited an Orthodox priest, Sandóvich, a native of the village of Zhdynia, 12 versts away, to come and minister to them, giving him a house and some land, and themselves providing for his maintenance. The local authorities, in spite of the Austrian Constitution providing for perfect religious liberty, had refused them permission to build a Church. The services, held in a private room, had been constantly interfered with by the

gendarmes, who, after having brought Father Sandóvich into Court, and having got him fined on various occasions, had on Easter Day last surrounded the house while he was celebrating the Holy Communion and arrested him immediately afterwards (we were then in the room in a peasant's cottage where this had taken place), and he was thrown into prison at Lemberg, and has remained there ever since. I told the peasants that the reason that I had come to see them was because I wished to know the truth of what had been written about them in the English papers, and that I particularly wished to know whether what Prince Sapiéha had written was true, viz.: that Russian propagandists had been among them, and had been paying them from 50 to 100 roubles a head to change their religion. The effect of this question was indescribable. The men clenched their fists, the women burst into tears. "It's a lie," they said, "No one from independent Russia (*derzhávnoi Rusi*) has ever been here, nor did we ever see a single rouble in our lives. We get no money for being Orthodox: the Poles take our money, and our cattle, and our goods, and the gendarmes tell us that they will go on doing so until we go back to the Uniate Church. But we will starve to death first."

The question will naturally suggest itself to English readers, How such a state of things can be possible in a country like Austria, whose Constitution provides for complete freedom of conscience for all her subjects? I do not wish to mix English politics up in this matter, but it is impossible not to ask Englishmen to take warning from what is now going on in Galicia. In the middle of the last century Galicia was granted by the Austrian Government a form of Home Rule almost exactly like the project which is at present before the House of Commons. Now, in the Galician Parliament, or *Sejm*, the Polish party have a permanent and overwhelming majority; and, as the police and the whole administration is in their hands, they are able to ignore altogether the tolerant provisions of the Austrian Constitution. Moreover, as Galicia, out of the 120 members which

it sends to the *Reichsrath* at Vienna, contributes a solid phalanx of 70 Polish members, and they happen just to hold the balance of parties in that House, any Government which attempted redress would instantly run the risk of being thrown out of office. Under the law, leave has to be got in Galicia, as elsewhere in Austria, from the local authority, for anything of the nature of a public meeting. It is quite easy, under such conditions as I have described, to apply this law to religious gatherings for worship, even when held in private houses, and, on the pretence of their being illegal meetings, to inflict fines or imprisonment on those who attend them, when, as in the case at Grab, there are six Polish gendarmes at the disposal of the priest Kislevsky to bring the peasants up before the Courts in the district town of Zmigrod and the county town of Jaslo, the *personnel* of these Courts being likewise at the disposition of the Polish masters of the situation. More than sixty fines have been imposed on the peasants of Grab on this ground alone. Besides this, the Orthodox peasants are fined on all sorts of other pretexts, and when they point out that those who remain in the Uniate Church are not subjected to the same penalties, the gendarmes tell them quite frankly that they had better return to the obedience of Kislevsky. One woman told me that she had been fined 50 crowns for allowing thistles to grow in her field, and I found afterwards that this was a favourite way of putting the screw upon the Orthodox in that neighbourhood. Altogether, on one pretext or another, 400 of the Orthodox peasantry have been mulcted in the last 18 months of sums ranging from 50 to 400 crowns; that is to say, from £2 2s. 6d. to £18, sums which are a serious matter for such very poor people. As Count Bobrinsky wrote in the *Times* of the people in the village of Telige, so also in the village of Grab, many of them have had to sell their goods and cattle and even clothes (thick coats for winter wear) to meet these imposts. The peasant Silvester Pavelchak, whose house was one of those that I visited, had gone that very day to Zmigrod

to sell his only cow to pay a fine of 50 crowns, which he, and 11 other peasants as well, had incurred for holding (according to their custom) lighted tapers in their hands at a service in his house on the eve of St. Nicholas Day last December. The Court at Zmigrod had condemned them on the pretext of there being a danger of setting the village on fire. The peasants had appealed in the County Court at Jaslo, and the Jewish lawyer, whom they had employed to defend them, had pointed out that in every Jewish cottage in Galicia Sabbath candles are weekly burnt without any interference. But all in vain: the decision was upheld, and now Silvester had to sell his cow to pay the fine and the costs. Their houses are searched by the police for Russian literature, and anything written in Russian, however remotely removed from religion or politics, is confiscated. One man told me that the gendarmes had taken from him some poems by Pushkin, another, *Paras Bulba*, by Gogol (!); another, a popular tract in Russian upon the cultivation of small holdings. It is not surprising that indignation is spreading, and that the five other villages already mentioned in the neighbourhood have left the *Unia*, and have declared themselves Orthodox. And the same thing is going on all over the country. Two days later I attended an out-of-door meeting in another part of the Carpathians, some twenty miles to the East of Grab, in which Mr. Kurilóvich, member of the Austrian *Reichsrath* for that district, and other speakers spoke very plainly upon the subject to an enthusiastic audience of near upon a thousand peasants. This gave me the opportunity, before and after the meeting, of a good deal of conversation with peasants from another set of villages to those which I had already visited. The stories they had to tell were much the same. Some fifteen of them had been in America as emigrants, and could talk English. A fine young man, over six feet in height, and with long yellow moustache and blue eyes, who had been mining in Pennsylvania, told me that he had come back to help his father on his farm, but that, on his father's death, he intended to return to America,

as it was a country where he was allowed to practise his own religion, and where he could read and teach his children his own language without interference by the police. In America, over 40,000 of the Galician emigrants have left the *Unia* and joined the Orthodox community under the Russian Archbishop who resides in New York. I wonder whether Prince Sapiéha would maintain that a Russian political propaganda, and sums of 50 and 100 roubles, are all-powerful in the United States? If he were to do so, I think that most Englishmen would smile. One man, with whom I spoke, had been in Canada, and he said: "Why does not our Government treat us as the English Government treats the French out there?"

This leads me to my last point. The French in Canada are some of the most faithful of the subjects of the British Crown; but it is difficult to believe that they would long remain so, supposing that the Canadian Government were to attempt to Anglicanize their Church services, to force upon their schools, instead of French, a jargon composed of a mixture of Provençal and Italian dialects, or were to send the police to search their houses and confiscate volumes of Molière, Racine, and Corneille. And, supposing anything so impossible to occur, it is hard to believe, however much we at home are all agreed that our colonies are best left to manage their own affairs, that the English Government would have nothing to say in the matter. Let the Austrian Government take the matter in hand, and put a stop to this abominable and cowardly persecution before it is too late. The desire of the present Russian Government to live at peace with Austria is well known. But Russians have hearts, and warm hearts, too, and they feel on this subject just what we should feel, were Englishmen in any part of the world being treated in such a way as these peasants all over Galicia are being treated. It is an odious calumny to accuse these poor people, just because the religion they wish to practise happens, amongst other countries, to be practised in Russia, of being "Russian agents" and "Muscovite spies," and conspirators

against the Austrian Government. During the time I was in Galicia, although I heard plenty of plain speaking, both about the local administration and about the Galician ecclesiastical authorities, I never heard a word of disrespect for the venerable Austrian Emperor. At the political meeting which I attended he was spoken of with perfect loyalty and devotion, and amongst the peasants in the villages more than one assured me that, if "our *Tzisar*" knew what was going on, he would soon put matters right. They are proud of the day on which, soon after he ascended the throne in 1848, in the midst of the revolution which was then raging throughout the Austrian Empire, and in Vienna in particular, the Ruthenian guard was on duty at the Hofburg, and the Emperor said: "To-day I can sleep in peace, for my faithful Ruthenians are standing on guard in the Burg"; and they often refer to this incident, and also to the fact that the Austrian Government itself at that time designated them "the Tyrolese of the East," as being conspicuous, in contrast to the Polish and Hungarian rebels, for their loyalty. At Grab they told me, "We are the faithful children of our Emperor (*viérnyji diéti* našhego Tzisarja*), we gladly give him recruits and would die for him." On the Emperor's birthday, the choir in the Church of the Stavropigia at Lemberg sang at the end of the service a verse of the National Anthem in the local dialect to Haydn's well-known tune, the translation of which is as follows; "God, be Thou protector to the Kaiser (*Tzisarju*), and to his domains! A ruler, strong in the faith, may he wisely lead us! The crown of his ancestors we will defend against the foe. Closely with the throne of the Hapsburgs the destiny of Austria is bound." It was heartily taken up by the congregation, many of them

* I retain the correct Russian spelling, with English equivalents (*ié* and *y*) for the letters *iatj* and *jerj*, although with the Lemki, as in some of the other Little Russian dialects they are both pronounced very much like *i*. On the other hand, the termination of the nom. plur. of the adjective with *i* instead of the ordinary Russian *ju* is a genuine grammatical variant of the dialects in these districts.

kneeling or crossing themselves. I am convinced that the story of Russian propaganda with Russian roubles is pure nonsense. It is quite possible, though I do not know it, that individual Russians may subscribe to some of the private institutions known as "burses," where provision is made for children who are attending schools in the towns to live in their own Ruthenian surroundings instead of being turned into Poles or Ukrainophiles by the schoolmasters appointed by the local Government: if I were a Russian, and had the opportunity, I myself should certainly do so. I can only say that, having gone out to Galicia with every wish to take an unbiassed view of the question at issue between the three correspondents in the *Times*, I found that Count Bobrinsky's letter contained the truth, and, if not the whole, nor even half of the truth of all that I saw, at least nothing but the truth.

W. J. BIRKBECK.

APPENDIX.

THE following is the correspondence which appeared in the columns of the *Times* during last spring under the heading of "Religious Persecution in Galicia."

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN GALICIA.

A HISTORY OF THE STRUGGLE.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES." (*April 10, 1912.*)

SIR,—During the last few months we find in the Russian newspapers mention of a new and strong religious movement among the Russian peasants in Galicia (Austria) and in the east of Hungary. The people there are by nationality Little Russians, often known by the Latin name "Ruthens," belonging to the southern branch of the Russian people. There are $3\frac{1}{2}$ millions of them in Galicia and half a million in Hungary. They have lived for more than 1,000 years there, on both slopes of the Middle and Southern Carpathians. In religion they are "Uniates," subject to the Pope and Roman dogma, but preserving the liturgy, marriage of clergy, and other customs and traditions of the Orthodox Greek Church, and their service is in Church Slavonic, as in Russia, Bulgaria and Servia. The Russians of the Carpathians and adjoining slopes were converted to Christianity in the 10th century, and up to the middle of the 14th century Galicia was part of political Russia and played a prominent part in early Russian history, but in 1340 Galicia was conquered by the Poles, and from that year dates the long and often bloodstained struggle between the original inhabitants, standing firm in defence of their Russian nationality and Orthodox faith, and the Polish conquerors doing their utmost to Polonize and Romanize Carpatho-Russia, or Red Russia, as that part of ancient Russia is called. The issue of the struggle is not decided yet, but it seems to be nearing its climax to-day.

After the battle of Sadowa, in 1866, Galicia came under the exclusive government of the Poles, and in this new Poland all the bigotry of ancient Poland has sprung up with terrible vigour. The tolerant Austrian Constitution is trodden under foot. Russian schools, however private, are not allowed, Russian books are confiscated, and boys found reading a Russian author are

expelled from the gymnasiums. At the elections, whether Parliamentary or provincial, Russian voters are either prevented by troops from entering the polling booths or the result of the election is falsified. "Galician elections" have become proverbial in Austria. In matters religious their state is even worse. An ex-officer of cavalry, a certain Count Shepstitski, has been appointed Metropolitan of Galicia, and is doing all he can to Polonize and Romanize his Russian flock, of which he has proved himself to be not the shepherd but the wolf. The "Uniate" priests who remain faithful to the ancient Slavonic liturgy so loved by the people are being harshly persecuted; new customs and ceremonies, abhorred by the people, are being introduced, and celibacy is being forced on the clergy. Count Shepstitski is completely under the Jesuits, who are now absolute masters of the "Uniate" Church; to them also has of late been given the training of future priests.

But, as says the English proverb, "The darkest cloud has its silver lining"; this policy has opened the eyes of hundreds of thousands of "Uniates," and now they see clearly that the only way to save their splendid Eastern liturgy and Church traditions is openly to sever the chain which by fraud and force has linked them to Rome and the Jesuits. Village after village has declared itself to a man no longer "Uniate" but Orthodox. The movement began in 1903, when the large village of Laluchié, in the district of Suiatin, joined the Greek Orthodox Church, and, though men have been imprisoned and soldiers quartered upon the villagers, the peasants have remained firm, and such services as can be performed without a priest have been read clandestinely. In Hungary a similar movement to that in Galicia broke out even earlier—more than ten years ago—because the Government began to substitute Magyar for the Slavonic language of the Church service. The villages of Tza, near the town of Hust, Welikii Luchki, and others have openly confessed the Orthodox faith and have suffered terrible persecution in consequence. For many years the Orthodox in Hungary and Galicia have been in search of priests, but the Orthodox bishops in Austria-Hungary (in Bukovina and Croatia), named and watched by the Government, have been prevented from acceding to their prayers, and the Synod of Russia and the Russian bishop in America, though constantly petitioned, were powerless, for the Austro-Hungarian Government expels from the Empire any Russian who dares to come near these "contaminated" villages.

But the year 1911 opens a new period of this splendid struggle for spiritual life. A number of fervent young men, all Russian Galicians and Russian Hungarians, subjects of

Austria-Hungary, and therefore not liable to be expelled, have sought and obtained Holy Orders in the convents of Mt. Athos and in some of the Greek and Orthodox Churches of the East, and in the course of last year they have returned, some monks and some married priests, to minister to their Orthodox countrymen. Wherever they settle, the whole neighbourhood passes openly from the Roman-Uniate confession to the Orthodox faith. In Hungary one of these priests has been imprisoned five times in the last eight months, but in Galicia the persecution is implacable. While I write all the Orthodox priests of Galicia, without a single exception, are in prison by order of the police, though there is no law which could be brought to bear against these peaceful missionaries. On Christmas Day, in the village of Telige, in the district of Sokial, 500 people, assembled for the Communion service, were brutally scattered by the Polish police; 200 men of the village have been heavily fined, and those who could not pay at a moment's notice have had their cattle and warm clothes sold. No appeal was allowed.

Much the same took place also on Christmas Day in the village of Grab, in the district of Zinigorod. The peasants of that village, men, women, and children, have been summoned before the tribunal of Jaslo, 30 miles distant across hills deep in snow. Three times they have been brought on foot to Jaslo and three times has the case been postponed. "Come back to the Uniate Church," say the police, "and we will trouble you no more; when your children begin to die of the frost and fatigue you will be sure to yield." But these Russian mountaineers will not yield. All these persecutions, of which I have mentioned only a few, kindle the flame of ardent faith among the Russian peasantry of Galicia, and the movement towards Orthodoxy is becoming wider and deeper every day. People who know the country affirm that there will be as many Orthodox parishes as there will be men ready to be priests and confront prison and other persecutions; and the newspapers in Galicia tell us that there are at least 50 men who will soon have Holy Orders, and then the movement is sure to become general. May some English writer come to Galicia and Eastern Hungary, see for himself what is being done, and tell his mind and the mind of England to the persecutors through the medium of the British Press! So might their smiting hand perhaps be paralysed.

I am, Sir, yours faithfully,

COUNT VLADIMIR BOBRINSKY,
Member of the Imperial Russian Duma.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN GALICIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES." (April 20, 1912.)

SIR,—May I, as a Ruthenian, be permitted to say a few words concerning Count W. Bobrinsky's letter in your issue of the 10th inst. on "Religious Persecution in Galicia"? I must confess that I was amazed to see the letter in your columns. Of what Russians does Count W. Bobrinsky speak? There are no Russians in Galicia. Of what persecution of Russian language does he complain? There is no Russian language spoken there. Count W. Bobrinsky exploits the similarity of words—"Roosyn" (a Ruthenian) and "Russian"—and tries to mislead the English public. How dare he speak of the historic Church of our people as of an intrigue of Jesuits? How does he not shrink from insulting publicly our Metropolitan, Count Sheptyski, who is a highly patriotic man, and to whose person our whole community is sincerely devoted? There is not a line in the whole letter of Count W. Bobrinsky that does not say the contrary to truth. No Orthodox priests are in prison in Galicia—I mean for their religious convictions. In fact, there are only several Orthodox priests to be found in Galicia. No interference of the police into the religious matters did take place of recent years, and however the Ruthenians may suffer from the oppression by Polish magnates, Russians have nothing to say about it, because our people have to suffer even more in the South of Russia, in the Ukraine, where even the Bible, published in our language by the British and Foreign Bible Society, has been strictly banished by the colleagues of Count W. Bobrinsky.

To conclude this letter I should like to express the same *pium desiderium* as that expressed by Count W. Bobrinsky in his letter: May some English writer come to our Galicia and Eastern Hungary and see for himself what is being done. He will see that the Greek-Catholic Ruthenian people, whose "Uniate" religion is their historic religion, are valiantly struggling for the betterment of their lot, and that they do not deserve the enmity of the British Press, which Count W. Bobrinsky tries to invoke on them.

I am, Sir, yours very truly,

V. STEPANKOWSKY.

37, Sinclair-road, W.

RELIGIOUS PERSECUTION IN GALICIA.

TO THE EDITOR OF "THE TIMES," (May 27, 1912.)

SIR,—I found in the 39,869th No., April 10, 1912, of *The Times* an article with the title "Religious Persecution in Galicia—History of the Struggle," signed by the Count Wladimir Bobrynski, member of the Russian Duma. This article contains an accusation of the so-called "Polish rule" in that part of Austrian Poland in which I live. This accusation is really too bold and false in all details to be taken seriously. However, as this article has been put in a conspicuous place in a paper as important as yours, and as evidently by means of it Count Bobrynski intended to deceive the English public, I think it my duty to say at least one word in defence of truth.

Living myself amongst the Ruthenian inhabitants of Galicia I can appreciate the real value of what Count Bobrynski calls "a splendid struggle for spiritual life," and to my intense disgust I must call it a sporadic effort of Russian-Orthodox propaganda, worked chiefly by money. The Ruthenian peasants being poor and, alas, often on a low level of religious culture, some of them eagerly accept a substantial aid in the shape of 50 to 100 roubles a head without realizing that it involves a change of religion and disloyalty to the State. I would be pleased to receive in Galicia any representative of the English Press who would care to judge of the state of things on the spot.

About 40 years ago the leading part of the Ruthenian clergy belonged to the so-called "Russophile" Party; many of them went over to Russia, but all their efforts did not detach the people from the religion of their fathers—the "Greek-Catholic" or "Uniate" Church.

What the libellous attack of Count Bobrynski says of a Polish persecution and of the Polonizing and Romanizing of the Orthodox people is rather a strife of the Ruthenian political parties amongst themselves; on the other hand, the Austrian Government may not and should not endure a propaganda which is much more anti-dynastic and detrimental to the State than religious.

To characterize the accuracy of the honourable member of the Duma I must add a few words about the Archbishop Andrew Szeptycki, Metropolitan of Lemberg, whom he describes as an ex-officer of Cavalry and an instrument of Romanization in

Polish hands. This dignitary of the "Greek-Catholic" rite entered as a young man into the Order of the Basilian Monks and was made Archbishop a few years—ten, to be exact—ago. He has the majority of the Polish opinion against him, being himself a firm and fervent adherent of the Ruthenian National idea and the Uniate rite.

I will be always ready to furnish ampler information and to prove it by statistical dates and positive facts.

I am, Sir, yours truly,

PRINCE PAUL SAPIEHA.

Sea Lawn, Babbacombe Downs, near Torquay.

THIS BOOK IS DUE ON THE LAST DATE
STAMPED BELOW

AN INITIAL FINE OF 25 CENTS
WILL BE ASSESSED FOR FAILURE TO RETURN
THIS BOOK ON THE DATE DUE. THE PENALTY
WILL INCREASE TO 50 CENTS ON THE FOURTH
DAY AND TO \$1.00 ON THE SEVENTH DAY
OVERDUE.

JAN 20 1980

DIC 1987

MAR 1988

APR 7 1985

SEP 15 1996

8 JAN 33 1988

LIBRARY USE

APR 26 1960

LD 21-50m-8,32

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA LIBRARY

U.C. BERKELEY LIBRARIES



051121936

